



## Bellwether Magazine

---

Volume 1  
Number 14 *Spring 1985*

---

Article 6

4-1-1985

# Animal Crackers

M. Josephine Deubler  
*University of Pennsylvania*

---

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. <http://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether/vol1/iss14/6>  
For more information, please contact [libraryrepository@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:libraryrepository@pobox.upenn.edu).



# Animal Crackers



## American Kennel Club Centennial Show

The largest Dog Show in the Western Hemisphere was held in November in Philadelphia as part of the A.K.C.'s Centennial celebration. There were 8,075 dogs, representing 141 different breeds or varieties, entered. The largest entry was 214 Doberman Pinschers, followed by 207 Siberian Huskies, 199 Irish Setters, 181 Dalmatians and 177 Borzois. Best in Show was a German Shepherd Dog, Ch. Covy Tucker Hills Manhattan.

This was the second show held by A.K.C. The first was the Susquicentennial Show in 1926. At that show, only 83 breeds and varieties were represented. Almost 50 "new" breeds have been accepted for competition since that show, and some breeds shown in 1926 are no longer recognized (Maremma Sheepdogs, Chinese-Crested, Owtchar, Eskimo, Mexican Hairless).

The most recent additions to the list of breeds eligible for competition at A.K.C. shows are the Pharaoh Hound, Portuguese Water Dog and Tibetan Spaniel added in 1983.

There have been some name changes since 1926. Russian Wolfhounds, first registered in 1891, became Borzoi in 1936. Registered originally in 1934 as Brittany Spaniels, this breed clarified its status by dropping the word "Spaniel" in 1982. The Staffordshire Terrier became the American Staffordshire Terrier in 1972 and Japanese Spaniels had their name changed to Japanese Chin in 1977.

The American Kennel Club has grown tremendously in its first 100 years. In 1886, the first full year of its existence, 1,896 dogs of 26 breeds were registered. In 1885, there were 11 all-breed dog shows held. In 1983, over 10,000 events were held by nearly 3,000 clubs across the country.

Pure-Bred Dogs/American Kennel Gazette, popularly called the Gazette, has been published without interruption since January 1889. It publishes actions taken by A.K.C., lists dates for shows, obedience trials and field trials as well as the judges, and contains many interesting and informative articles.

We all wish the American Kennel Club another century of progress.

## Training Your Dog.

There have been many theories advanced and many books written about training dogs. The "average" dog owner will enjoy *Dog Training Made Easy* by Michael Tucker (Howell Book House, New York, \$17.95). It covers selecting a companion dog and teaching it to be obedient, happy and trustworthy. The author has a dog-training school in Australia and specializes in dealing with problem dogs as well as training procedures.

The author says that except for a small minority which have reached the point of no

return, most dogs can be trained to have their faults corrected. The owner needs to be trained with the dog. The breed should be considered carefully and look at adult dogs as well as puppies. If a large breed is selected, the owner's ability to control the dog should be considered. A puppy should go to his new home between the ages of eight and 12 weeks (never before six weeks of age). This is the most receptive time for it to learn simple commands such as "Come", "Sit", and "Heel." Between 12 and 16 weeks, puppies often try to get their own way and this is the time it must learn that the master is the boss and pack leader. From the fourth to seventh month, the puppy must get out and meet people, other dogs and things that happen in the street, or you might have a puppy fearful of things in the outside world.



The chapter on *Puppy Conditioning* emphasizes the importance of getting the puppy accustomed to things that might happen in the home (strangers, vacuum cleaners, etc.) and in the outside world, including how to meet dogs on and off leash.

*Common Problems* are jumping up, barking, etc. It is likely that the owner is the problem rather than the dog. Whatever the problem, it is unacceptable for the owner but great fun for the dog. A principle of dog training is that you should always be in a position to prevent or correct any wrong move the dog may make. Aggression might be prevented from developing if the male is castrated before 12 months of age, but is less likely to help in older days.

*Temperament* should be suited to the dog's work (security, herding, guiding the blind, dog shows, field trials, obedience trials, etc.) or its place as a family pet. Traits such as jealousy, wilfulness, stubbornness and excitability can be overcome with training.

The chapter on *The Dog's Senses* states that a dog's sense of hearing comes second to his

sense of smell, his sense of vision takes third place and then comes his senses of touch and taste. A dog also has a sense of balance, a sense of heat, a sense of direction and an incredible sense of time. In addition, there is evidence to suggest that he can sense the supernatural.

Chapters cover training equipment and well-illustrated training procedures, basic and advanced. There are a number of true stories about problem dogs.

This is one of the better books on training available. While all experts might not agree on the methods used, the reader will learn the basics involved in educating a dog.

## Gestation Period

In the dog, the average length of pregnancy is 65 days, but is extremely variable because dog sperm can survive in the uterus for many days before ovulation occurs. Conceptions from a single breeding may result in apparent pregnancies of 58 to 71 days.

Average duration of pregnancy in other animals:

Cat	63-65 days
Cow	280 days
Mare	330-340 days
Elephant	20-22 months
Sheep	145-150 days
Mouse	18-20 days
Squirrel	44 days
Sperm Whale	16 months
Deer	200-220 days
Goat	150 days
Raccoon	63 days
Rhinoceros	530-550 days
Camel	410 days

All of the above are not exact. There are variations among breeds of cattle, mutton and wool breeds of sheep, etc.

## Epidemiology of Cancer

Numerous studies have found that cancers occur frequently in dogs and cats. One report covering a six-year period, shows that in a population of 100,000 (humans), the incidence was 272 cases in man, 381 in dogs and 155 in cats. In man, the most frequent site was the digestive system, while in dogs cancer occurred most frequently in the breast and skin. The lymphocytic system accounted for most cases of cancer in cats.

In animals, few attempts have been made to identify the cause in cancer. In humans, it has been estimated that 90% of cancers are the result of environmental factors and 10% can be attributed to genetic or viral factors. Recently, researchers in the Section of Epidemiology at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (VHUP) demonstrated that exposure of dogs to asbestos in the home or at the owner's workplace increases their likelihood of developing mesothelioma, a fatal cancer of the



lung or abdominal cavity.

These same epidemiologists are conducting a study of 150 dogs with breast cancer in order to identify dietary factors, drugs, or other exposures that increase their risk of this disease. The ultimate goal is to find a diet that will decrease the chances of developing breast cancer, especially in older, unspayed females.

Canine bladder cancer is another disease receiving the attention of the epidemiologists at VHUP. More than 100 cases have been diagnosed by the biopsy service. Preliminary findings suggest that the terrier breeds, particularly the Scottish Terrier, are more prone to bladder cancer. The Keeshond also appears to be at increased risk.

If funds can be collected, a bladder cancer study could be started. The objective would be to determine why certain breeds are at increased risk and if there is any association with a previous history of urinary tract infection. The research also would focus on exposure to specific chemicals in the home and neighborhood that could be related to development of bladder cancer in a susceptible breed.

This is one of many projects for which support is needed. Interested persons may contact Dr. Josephine Deubler at 215-898-8862.

## Book Review:

*Bird Owner's Home Health and Care Handbook*  
Gary A. Gallerstein, D.V.M.  
Howell Book House, Inc.  
230 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10169

Hard cover, 292 pages, including index with generous black and white photographs and line drawings, plus four pages of color plates illustrating normal and abnormal droppings.  
Price: \$17.95.

The text is well organized, beginning with the selection and purchase of a new bird, and

carries through husbandry practices, such as appropriate diets, cages, environments, and acceptable disinfectants.

The section on anatomy and physiology gives a brief description of each organ system, then explains how owners can evaluate the particular organ system at home— invaluable advice to the owner as well as the veterinarian. Owners will be more attuned to the variations in their birds, more observant of signs of disease, and more prompt and knowledgeable should a trip to the veterinarian become necessary. Specific disease entities are covered, and a special index is provided to direct the reader to locations in the text discussing particular clinical signs or problems.

Information is provided regarding a visit to the veterinarian: facilities, diagnostics, and treatment procedures. In addition, there are instructions on home supportive care for sick pet and wild birds, especially helpful should a veterinarian not be available immediately.

Avicultural procedures are briefly touched upon, and a list of national and foreign bird organizations is provided in the appendix. The appendix also contains concise data with general husbandry and breeding requirements for the more common caged birds.



To complete the wide spectrum of information provided, Dr. Gallerstein has included a very well written chapter, by Steve Martin, on "Taming and Training Birds". It includes practical suggestions for taming, as well as steps to follow to teach birds specific behaviors and tricks. There is also a section on commonly asked questions regarding behavior in birds.

This book probably represents the best organized and most generally informative book of its kind on the market today. The information provided is sufficient to provide novice and experienced bird owners with the background necessary to maintain their birds in optimum conditions for good health.

It does not provide details on the specific treatment of disease entities which are best left to the veterinarian. However, the home care measures described should maximize the chances for recovery should a bird become clinically ill as prompt treatment is more critical in birds than most other types of animals.

## Disinfecting with Clorox

Sodium hypochlorite solution is the disinfectant of choice to inactivate canine parvovirus and canine coronavirus. The recommended strength is one part of Clorox to 30 parts water. Use a measuring cup and add a half cup Clorox for each gallon of water. Do not make a stronger solution. Use plastic containers. The solution "eats" metal and cannot be used for soaking instruments or metal utensils. Clorox in water is used for disinfecting. For cleaning, a soap solution may be used instead of water to make the 1:30 dilution.

Parvoviruses are highly resistant to inactivation. Most disinfectants are not effective. Virus is found in fecal material for as long as three weeks after the dog has recovered from clinical illness. Coronaviruses may be shed intermittently for much long periods.

Prevention depends on a vaccination program. However, when a disease is present, special effort is necessary to eliminate the virus from kennels and prevent unnecessary exposure.

# Animal Health Technician Program

**T**en years ago, the School of Veterinary Medicine and Harcum Junior College, Bryn Mawr, initiated a joint training program for Animal Health Technicians. Over the decade, the program has developed into one of the most successful ones offered by Harcum, and it is the only AVMA accredited program for animal health technicians in Pennsylvania.

Each year between 60 and 75 students enroll in the six-semester program which leads to an associate degree in science. Four semesters are spent in classroom instruction at Harcum in such subjects as mathematics, basic sciences, anatomy, veterinary parasitology, pharmacology, hematology and other subjects necessary for working with animals.

Once the classroom instructions end, students are ready for practical experience. This is garnered during a 26-week practicum at the School of Veterinary Medicine. The Harcum

students spend 13 weeks each at VHUP and at New Bolton Center. At both facilities they work in the wards, the emergency clinic, the operating room, intensive care unit, radiology and anesthesiology. They receive hands-on experience in the small animal hospital and in the large animal hospital. By the time the practicum is over they have cared for such diverse patients as a parrot or a mare with colic. Throughout the practicum the Harcum students are trained and taught by the staff nurses at the School, the clinicians, and the fourth-year students.

"The animal health technician program has not only benefitted the Harcum students but also our students," said Dr. Sheldon Steinberg, director of the program at the School. "The veterinary students, while working with the animal health technicians, get an understanding of the routine tasks technicians can perform, from drawing blood to running sophisticated tests. Our students learn to depend on the technicians and they realize that such personnel can greatly enhance the running of a veterinary practice."

The Harcum students are trained to use the advanced technology available here at the School. Though they are also trained to work with equipment commonly found at a veterinary practice. Most practitioners do not have automated development equipment for radiographs; in practice such films have to be developed by hand. This the technicians are taught. The training also includes the latest anesthesia methods and techniques. When the practicum is completed, Harcum students have a very good understanding of the demands of a veterinary office.

The graduates do not have trouble finding jobs. Many practitioners regularly contact the Harcum Career Center when looking for technicians. Many opportunities exist in private industry and in government for the animal health technicians.

The program, according to Dr. Steinberg, is a successful one, one which provides superb practical training and classroom training, equipping the graduates to work in a profession which is becoming quite sophisticated as new technology develops.